



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

Son of Cali Cartel leader sentenced to 262 months' imprisonment

MIAMI- R. Alexander Acosta, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, Jesus Torres, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and Mark R. Trouville, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), announced that defendant, William Rodriguez-Abadia, was sentenced today to 262 months' imprisonment by United States District Court Judge Federico A. Moreno for his involvement in a wide-ranging cocaine importation conspiracy that existed from 1990 to July 2002.

William Rodriguez-Abadia was one of the leaders of the infamous Cali Drug Cartel. He is the son of defendant Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela and the nephew of defendant Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela, who are the alleged founders of the Cali Cartel. Miguel and Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela are scheduled to go to trial in September 2006 before United States District Court Judge Federico A. Moreno.

According to the prosecution's factual proffer at the change of plea hearing, beginning in 1995, coinciding with the arrest of his father (Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela) and at his father's request, defendant Rodriguez-Abadia began operating various aspects of the Cali Cartel, an international drug syndicate directed for many years by Miguel and Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela.

In particular, Rodriguez-Abadia became responsible for administering his father's portion of the Rodriguez-Orejuela family business enterprises, including: Drogas La Rebaja, S.A., a pharmacy chain of approximately 350 pharmacies in Colombia; Laboratorios Kressfor de Colombia, S.A., a pharmaceutical manufacturing company in Colombia; and various other entities in Colombia. Defendant Rodriguez-Abadia helped initiate, develop, implement, and otherwise manage plans to launder and further conceal the Rodriguez-Orejuelas' drug profits through a variety of schemes involving these business entities.

In addition, according to the government's in-court proffer, Rodriguez-Abadia was responsible for arranging and ensuring the payment of bribe monies and payoffs to incarcerated Cartel employees and their families. These bribes and payoffs were made in an effort to prevent such

cartel employees from becoming witnesses against Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela and Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela.

Rodriguez-Abadia took these actions in concert with, and after consulting with, Miguel and Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela in furtherance of a wide-ranging conspiracy to import cocaine into the United States. Rodriguez-Abadia took these actions not only to facilitate the concealment of past drug trafficking activities, but also to facilitate the drug trafficking activities that Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela and Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela were continuing to engage in from within the La Picota prison. These drug trafficking activities involved the importation of at least two loads of cocaine, each containing multiple hundreds of kilograms of cocaine, into the United States in 1997 and 1998.

Moreover, according to in-court statements and documents, Rodriguez-Abadia's activities occurred between 1995 and approximately 2001, when the defendant went into hiding due to a request forwarded by the United States government to the Colombian government for his provisional arrest. During this period of hiding in various places in Colombia, Rodriguez-Abadia continued to reap the benefits of Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela's and Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela's drug trafficking, money laundering and corruption activities, as the fruits of this continued criminal activity provided him with the funds to remain in hiding.

Under the terms of his plea agreement, which is filed with the Court, Rodriguez-Abadia has agreed to cooperate with the United States and to testify at trial against his father Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela and his uncle Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela. Rodriguez-Abadia has also agreed to forfeit his right, title, and interest in all Rodriguez-Orejuela business entities in Colombia. Such business entities, which were financed with narcotics proceeds, have an estimated market value of \$300 million.

United States Attorney Acosta stated, "The best way to stop narco-traffickers and the influx of illegal drugs into South Florida is through the disruption, dismantling and prosecution of major drug cartels, such as the Cali Cartel. Today's lengthy prison sentence fairly and justly reflects the breadth and magnitude of William Rodriguez-Abadia's leadership in the criminal activities of the Cali Cartel. The United States Attorney's Office, along with our federal law enforcement partners at ICE and the DEA, continue to pursue and to prosecute those who operate these drug cartels."

"The countless hours worked by federal agents and prosecutors for more than a decade to bring this man to justice for his involvement in the Cali Cartel was well served," said Jesus Torres, Special Agent in Charge for ICE in Miami. "Today's sentencing should send the message to those engaged in the illegal drug trade that no matter where you are, or how long you've been evading the law, ICE, along with its federal partners, will continue working to find you and bring you to justice."

Mark R. Trouville, Special Agent in Charge for the Drug Enforcement Administration, stated, "We are grateful to our domestic and international law enforcement partners for their efforts in helping us pursue justice regardless of international borders. The Cali Cartel is one of the largest drug trafficking organizations in operation. It has been a top priority of the DEA to dismantle this organization. Working jointly with ICE, we have achieved this goal."

Mr. Acosta commended the investigative efforts of ICE and DEA. The case was prosecuted by Special Litigation Counsel Richard Gregorie, Special Assistant United States Attorney Edward Ryan, Assistant United States Attorney Matthew Axelrod, Assistant United States Attorney Lisa Hirsch, and Assistant United States Attorney Alison Lehr.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.